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Maryland Launches Grant Program for Mid-Sized Solar Energy Systems to Help Local Businesses Go Green

ANNAPOLIS, MD: The Maryland Energy Administration (MEA) today announced the launch of a new incentive program for mid-sized solar energy systems, made possible through funding from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA). This two year program will provide a total of up to \$1.45 million to lower the cost of rooftop solar energy systems for commercial buildings, allowing more Maryland businesses to receive the benefits of clean renewable energy from the sun.

“Maryland’s mid-sized solar grant program is a true ‘win’ for local businesses and workers. By taking advantage of this new resource, not only will businesses see a reduction in energy usage and operational costs in the long term, but they will also become a part of a Maryland that is *Smart, Green and Growing*, by taking this step to reduce their carbon footprint,” commented Governor Martin O’Malley. “I encourage local businesses to take advantage of this opportunity.”

The incentive program announced today covers two technologies, solar photovoltaic which converts light into electricity, and solar water heating, which converts light into heat energy to supplement natural gas or electric water heating. Both of these technologies have reached a level of technology maturity and reliability that makes them great long term investments for commercial buildings. Through the Maryland Energy Administration’s grant program, Marylanders may qualify for up to as much as \$500 per kilowatt for the first 20 kilowatts generated by a photovoltaic system, and up to 15% of the system cost for a solar hot water system; both systems have a cap of \$25,000 per grant at this time.

“The challenge for many businesses is that the costs for solar energy systems are all up-front, while the benefits accrue over many years of use,” noted MEA Director Malcolm Woolf. “The mid-sized incentive program, combined with the federal investment tax credit of 30%, is designed to help lower the upfront cost of these renewable energy systems so that businesses can continue to invest in clean renewable energy despite the difficult economy. We are thrilled to be able to serve the business community with this much-needed clean energy program.”

For more information on the mid-sized renewable grant program and application instructions, please go to <http://energy.maryland.gov/incentives/business/MidSizedSolarGrants.asp>

Earlier this year, the O’Malley- Brown Administration also launched the Maryland Green Registry, which strives to help build a smarter, greener, more sustainable Maryland by encouraging businesses and organizations of all types and sizes in both owned and leased space to go green. The Maryland Green Registry is a voluntary, self-certification program offering tips and resources to help organizations set and meet their own goals on the path to sustainability. For more information on how your business may qualify please visit: <http://www.mde.maryland.gov/MarylandGreen>